

Listing of Claims:

1. – 5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently amended) A validator of access to a service by a rechargeable voucher, the validator including ~~means for~~:

means for reading the voucher identification number,

means for recharging the voucher by writing into the voucher's recordable data storage means, and

means for storing a list of approved voucher ~~vouchers, the validation of which is authorized and/or forbidden~~ identification numbers representing the vouchers that have been approved for automatic recharge, wherein when a voucher holder presents a voucher to the validator, the validator compares the identification number of the presented voucher to said list of approved voucher identification numbers stored in said means for storing and automatically recharges the presented voucher without any intervention or action by the voucher holder when the identification number of the presented voucher is on said list of approved voucher identification numbers.

7. (Currently amended) A system for managing rechargeable vouchers ~~of access to a service accounts~~, the system comprising:

a central station for ~~executing service payment requests submitted by a user of a voucher independent of voucher charging or recharging operations~~ managing the status of the rechargeable voucher accounts and maintaining and updating a first list of approved voucher identification numbers representing a list of vouchers for which the voucher holder has paid for a recharge; and

a plurality of service access validation stations comprising validators, in communication with the central station, the central station periodically transmitting at least a portion of said first list of voucher identification numbers that have been approved for automatic recharge to at least

some selected service access validation stations , wherein ~~upon presentation of the voucher by the user, the validator performing charging or recharging operation on the voucher subject to an agreement from the central station~~ said validator comprises means for storing said first list and when a voucher holder presents a voucher to a validator, said validator compares the identification number of the presented voucher to said first list of voucher identification numbers and automatically recharges the presented voucher without any intervention or action by the voucher holder when the identification number of the presented voucher is on said first list of voucher identification numbers and provides the voucher holder an access to the service.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently amended) The system of claim 7, wherein the central station's management of the status of the rechargeable voucher accounts includes receiving payments from rechargeable voucher account holders for authorizing future automatic recharge of the voucher account holder's vouchers and upon said payment, providing the voucher account holders an option to user provide[[s]] an indication about the first validation station(s) to which service access validation station he intends to go first.

10. (Currently amended) The system of claim 7, wherein a number of rechargeable vouchers are designated to be automatically recharged periodically and during a time window at the end of each defined period, each such voucher presented to a validator automatically recharged by the validator when a voucher holder presents a such voucher to the validator to gain access to a service at the end of said defined period is automatically recharged by the validator and the validator generating a second list of voucher identification numbers representing the recharged vouchers and periodically transmitting said second list of voucher identification numbers to the central station, the voucher validity being then checked at the level of by the central station by comparison between comparing the second list of recharged vouchers and a to said first list of voucher identification numbers for which the recharge has been paid for, the central station then generating a third list of voucher identification numbers representing being then made of the vouchers for which the recharge has been performed and that have been recharged but not paid

for, ~~this last~~ said third list of voucher identification numbers being periodically transmitted to ~~some or to all~~ at least some of the validators, to enable ~~them~~ the validators to totally or partially inhibit ~~[[the]]~~ any unpaid vouchers belonging to this last list.

11. (Currently amended) The system of claim 7, wherein ~~for charging or recharging a voucher,~~ the system automatically determines according to a statistic criteria certain service access validation stations to which ~~said~~ a particular voucher is likely to be presented.

12. (Currently amended) A method for managing the status of rechargeable vouchers of access to a service, wherein a user of a voucher performs voucher accounts, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving payments by a central station from rechargeable voucher holders for recharging their vouchers;

the central station maintaining and updating at least one list of approved voucher identification numbers representing a list of vouchers for which the voucher holder has paid for a recharge;

periodically transmitting at least a portion of the list of approved voucher identification numbers from the central station to at least some selected service access validation stations, said validation stations comprising a validator configured to store said list;

~~communicating with a central station to make payments without connection with the voucher; and~~

when a rechargeable voucher holder presents a ~~presenting the voucher to [[a]] the~~ validator ~~of a service access validation station~~ to gain access to the service ~~wherein the validator performs a voucher charging or recharging operation subject to an agreement from the central station,~~ the validator comparing the identification number of said presented voucher to said list of approved voucher identification numbers stored in the validator;

the validator automatically recharging the presented voucher without any intervention or action by the voucher holder when the identification number of the presented voucher is on the list of approved voucher identification numbers; and

providing the voucher holder an access to the service.

13. (New) The system of claim 7, wherein the central station further maintaining a list of banned voucher identification numbers representing a list of vouchers that are not to be honored at any service access validation station.

14. (New) The system of claim 10, wherein the central station further maintaining a fourth list of voucher identification numbers that are designated to be automatically recharged periodically during a time window at the end of each defined period but were not presented to any validator during said time window, the central station transmitting said fourth list to the validators at the end of said time window so that those vouchers will be recharged next time any of them are presented to a validator.

15. (New) The method of claim 12, further comprising the central station maintaining and updating a list of banned voucher identification numbers representing a list of vouchers that are not to be honored at any service access validation station.

16. (New) The method of claim 12, further comprising:
designating a number of rechargeable vouchers to be automatically recharged periodically during a time window at the end of each defined period;
automatically recharging each such vouchers when a voucher holder presents such voucher to a validator to gain access to a service during the time window at the end of said defined period.

17. (New) The method of claim 16, further comprising:
the validator generating a second list of voucher identification numbers representing the recharged vouchers;
periodically transmitting said second list of voucher identification numbers to the central station;
the central station comparing the second list of voucher identification numbers to said first list of voucher identification numbers for which the recharge has been paid;
the central station generating a third list of voucher identification numbers representing the vouchers that have been recharged but not paid for; and

the central station periodically transmitting said third list of voucher identification numbers to at least some of the validators to enable the validators to totally or partially inhibit any unpaid vouchers.